United Nations A/CONF.199/10

World Summit on Sustainable Development

Johannesburg, South Africa
26 August–4 September 2002

Distr.: General
15 August 2002

Original: English

Item 9 of the provisional agenda*
General debate

Letter dated 12 August 2002 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the report of the Regional Workshop on Capacity-Building in Governance and Public Administration for Sustainable Development in Countries with Economies in Transition, held in Thessaloniki, Greece, from 29 to 31 July 2002 (see annex).**

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg.

(*Signed*) Michael C. **Daratzikis**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

* A/CONF.199/1.
** The annex is being circulated in the language of submission only.

02-52909 (E) 190802

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Annex to the letter dated 12 August 2002 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

UNITED NATIONS

REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON CAPACITY-BUILDING IN GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN COUNTRIES WITH ECONOMIES IN TRANSITION

Thessaloniki, Greece, 29-31 July

Workshop Report

General Assembly Resolution A/RES/50/225 of 1 May 1996 underscored the need for improved efficiency of public institutions, administrative procedures and sound financial management to harness the global challenges in support of sustainable development in all countries. Creating and strengthening institutional frameworks for sustainable development was emphasized in the Report of the Secretary-General "Implementing Agenda 21" (E/CN.17/2002/PC.2). The report also underlined the significance of involving civil society, academia and business community. The workshop on "*Capacity-Building in Governance and Public Administration for Sustainable Development*" targeted public administrators and NGO representatives from countries with economies in transition (Baltic, Central and South Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe, Caucasian and Central Asia) and also from Greece and Turkey. These regions face a challenge of making their public institutions fully equipped to achieve the goals of sustainable development (SD) in their countries.

Efforts must be undertaken to promote better understanding, propose enabling means to foster SD and equitable economic and human development. The world has seen a change both in the concept and approaches to development. Human beings are at the core of SD, as agents for their self-empowerment and for ensuring the sustainability of the environment, in which they live and act. Progress towards SD in this region has not taken a linear path since 1992. SD efforts have been slowed and in some cases interrupted by financial crises, environmental and natural disasters, armed conflicts and some of the negative consequences of globalization.

An overriding challenge is how the participating countries can move towards SD in practice; how they can take action and move on to implementation. Actual interventions will vary greatly within the region depending on geographic location, natural resource base, levels of social and economic development and physical and political infrastructures. Some concerns of SD are most effectively dealt with internally, others have a potential for more regional cooperation and still others are most appropriately dealt with through international cooperation. The region can serve as an example to others from the richness of its cultural and the sustainable livelihoods that it does practice and vie to improve.

Civil society and policy makers have an increasing understanding of the need to harmonize economic development, social development strategies and regulations. Human and institutional capacity-building in public administration is essential to implement sound policies for SD.

II. Executive Summary

The Workshop on Capacity-Building in Governance and Public Administration for Sustainable Development in Countries with Economies in Transition was organized and administered by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, through its Division for Public Economics and Public Administration (DPEPA) at the United Nations Thessaloniki Centre (UNTC) in Greece from 29 to 31 July 2002.

After brief welcoming words on behalf of UNDESA focusing on the objectives of the capacity-building programme for countries with economies in transition, the outcomes of the Thessaloniki workshop and the importance of its preparation as contribution of the region in Johannesburg, the representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations underlined the main thematic areas and implications of the Johannesburg Summit for governments, public service and civil society.

Seventy-three participants attended the meeting, including 47 representatives from 26 countries (24 government officials and 23 NGO representatives), representatives of the United Nations Secretariat, ECE and UNDP, and representatives from two regional organizations (CIS, NISPAcee) and from OECD. (See list of participating Countries and Organizations in Annex 1.)

The participants in the workshop discussed the major challenges and opportunities faced by decision makers in the area of SD. Therefore, the participants acquired the knowledge to review their national SD strategies and identify which initiatives might be undertaken for their realization. Leading experts presented papers on governance and public administration key issues and role for SD as well as the work of DPEPA in this field. The workshop also emphasized the importance of strengthening and building institutions, and developing human capacities for countries with economies in transition in order to meet the challenges of the third millennium. This will help them achieve their objectives towards poverty alleviation, sustained economic growth and SD through reinforced public administration systems and cross-sector integrated and participatory strategies and policies.

During the meeting, the main conclusions and recommendations focused on the main issues, challenges and possible solutions for better governance and SD at the national, local, sub-regional and regional levels, in particular, in relation to:

- Institutional structures;
- Functions, roles and responsibilities of actors and stakeholders;
- Mechanisms, procedures, methodologies and guidelines for design, coordination, coherence, consensus-building, dialogue, follow-up, evaluation and monitoring of policies, programmes and projects for SD;
- Laws, rules, performance indicators, ethics and diversity, management;
- Human resources development and management;
- Exchange of experiences, capacity-building and UN technical cooperation programme on governance, public administration and SD for both government agencies and NGOs of the region.

III. Opening Session

The representative of the Secretary-General focused his opening remarks on the main thematic areas and implications of the Johannesburg Summit for the government, public service and civil society. After a brief presentation on the Summit, and in the broader context of United Nations conferences and summits including Doha and Monterey stressing the international community's high expectations, the SG representative pointed out the importance of the commitment to good governance in order to achieve SD. He emphasized the challenges of the region taking into account the different national contexts, especially poverty and inequities as well as patterns of production and consumption that bear on SD. Finally he presented the five following selected strategic areas for SD: Water, Energy, Health, Agriculture and Biodiversity.

The Secretary-General for Environmental Affairs of Greece pointed to the importance of the Johannesburg Summit as a major event for all countries including the CIS countries. He thanked the United Nations for taking the initiative of organizing this workshop and stressed the importance of the countries of the region to meet in a multi-dimensional framework:

- SD from the Johannesburg Summit perspective;
- Governance including global environmental governance;

- **Public administration to develop and implement strategies for SD.**

Within this critical framework, Greece will assume the EU presidency in January 2003 and support initiatives, which contribute positively to peace, to the respect of human beings, to the environment, and to the well being of future generations. Greece has already defined a national strategy for SD and actively contributes to the definition of the European strategy. The development of effective global governance mechanisms, and the contribution of civil society are essential. Greece, as a EU and OECD member and on account of its geographical position and substantive regional cooperation is actively involved in the development of these issues at the European, Mediterranean and Balkan regional levels. Working closely with the European Commission, the Greek Ministry for Environment hosted in Athens the second Ministerial Conference for Environmental Issues. The Athens Declaration that was adopted on 10 July 2002 by the Conference will be the platform for extensive cooperation between the Euro-Mediterranean countries.

The Turkish Vice Minister of Environment expressed her appreciation to UNDESA for its efforts in organizing this very important workshop and to the Government of Greece for hosting it. She mentioned her delight at co-chairing this big event with her Greek colleague. The most prominent agenda item to be discussed or negotiated during the Summit of Johannesburg is the cross-sectoral issues, with the highest priority in implementing SD targets. Among these cross-sectoral issues, governance, more specifically "good governance," is at the top of the agenda. Today, it has been well understood that SD is not an issue that can be taken in isolation without considering governance and public administration. Successes or failures in governance and public administration will directly affect SD policy as well as other national policies and actions. A consensus on economic and social aspects is very important. She shared her country's experience in partnership with NGOs for SD, which, among other things, produced national report for both civil society and public administration to be presented at Johannesburg. Finally, she expressed her strong belief that this distinguished group will realize a very successful workshop.

IV. Country Reports

Representatives of governments and NGOs from 21 countries presented brief reports on governance, public administration, partnership and sustainable development. The participants provided their perspectives on the progress achieved and the obstacles and challenges faced by their countries, major constraints, on SD as well as proposals for action to address the specific issues identified. Several countries presented also success stories especially in the framework of local Agenda 21 that could be shared with other countries and extended at cross-boundary level.

In his sum-up of the session, the representative of the Secretary-General described sustainable development as a journey rather than a destination. So far, this journey has not been long; Stockholm was the point of departure, in 1972. In 30 years, however, since 1972, the world has rediscovered "sustainable development" in light of past mistakes, and newly emerging concerns. When it all started, most countries still adhered to an approach, which fully accorded priority to economic growth, with heavy industry stressed in many of the countries, currently described as economies in transition. An important side effect of this approach was the serious aggravation of the problem of pollution of land and water resources with resulting degradation of the environment in many parts of the world. Growing scepticism about the prospects of unlimited progress led to the necessity of more sustainable patterns of production and consumption to establish and to maintain a better equilibrium between human activity and the demands it makes on the eco-system on the one hand, and what the eco-system is able to sustain on the other. This

has also to secure a better distribution of the benefits of economic activity within and between countries throughout the world in the wake of globalisation.

The transition to a market economy was pursued by the countries of the region in various ways and at a different pace. The complex transition process brought a new set of problems such as aggravation of poverty, income disparities and unemployment; the consequent deterioration of basic social services like health, education and welfare; high levels of insecurity in areas ravaged by conflicts and decline of law and order; the rise of corruption and organized crime and their effects on the credibility of the institutions of government.

Development is now seen as multi-dimensional, calling for pressing reforms especially with the political changes, which the advent of democracy and competitive markets have brought in their wake. With these changes, conventional structures of government no longer prove sufficient. The emergence of a vibrant civil society is gradually changing the environment in which governments work. It demands new structures, new approaches and a new style of governance with greater decentralization and regulation in the exercise of power, as well as financial resources to local communities and NGOs; information, consultation and participation of citizens; closer coordination of government agencies in policy decisions on cross-sectoral problems. Some conventional structures remained with a modified role, while new structures have come into being. Most of the countries have established a Ministry of the Environment and/or Commission(s) on SD.

The need and opportunities for regional cooperation have given rise to numerous inter-governmental agencies. In East and Central Europe and the CIS examples of this trend can be found in every field and every part of the region: the process "Environment for Europe", the Caspian Ecological Programme, Black Sea Cooperation Agency, Baltic 21 for cross-Baltic cooperation, International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, Caucasus and Central Asia and, finally, the Mediterranean Action Programme.

Everywhere, coordination presents itself in two directions: Horizontal coordination among agencies of government; and vertical coordination between agencies of government and/or NGOs operating on the national, sub-national and international levels. The majority of countries are currently engaged in complex negotiation on membership of either regional pacts (e.g. European Union, OECD and NATO) or global organization like WTO. Some countries are already full members of these organizations. All countries have been involved in preparatory work for the Johannesburg Summit and/or the implementation of Agenda 21. Local agendas 21 have been mainly developed and monitored by NGOs. Such new more complex structures and multi-stakeholder approaches are making new demands on government and NGOs, which many are ill-prepared to meet. New legal and institutional frameworks need to be developed or refined, which both work more effectively and inspire greater confidence among the people at large and the private sector, nationally and internationally. Strategies and structures, which secure integrity, transparency and accountability in all government activities and all levels, are urgently needed. Respect for the rule of law has also been emphasized during the past decade after years of relative neglect. Increasingly, SD has come to embrace concerns, which lie at the intersection of many different fields: politics, administration, economics, health, education, culture, science, technology and the environment. Coping with these concerns, whether at the national, sub-national or international levels, calls for high-level skills and competencies and important human resources development (HRD).

What both the country reports and the ensuing discussion brought into sharp relief are the scope and possibilities for regional and sub-regional approaches in meeting this new challenge. Technical cooperation is taking on new forms, some using cutting edge information technology.

Networks have been developed (e.g. NISPAcee), which bring together institutes and schools of public administration from the region.

The Workshop demonstrated the existence of common concerns, which can be properly dealt with through technical cooperation on the international, regional and sub-regional levels. Sub-regional activities have started and need to be strengthened with support from the United Nations. They are particularly useful in light of the diversity of conditions and needs in the region. The country reports provided a clear outline of the efforts made in governance, public administration and SD. Characteristic features of these efforts are:

- The manner in which countries have adopted the concept of SD. This demonstrates the importance that they attach to the issue of governance and public administration, and their commitment to continue their efforts to strengthen their capacity for governance;
- The degree of involvement of civil society actors and the NGO community. All participants acknowledged the importance of involving multi-partners in the analytical and policy-making processes as well as in the implementation of these decisions;
- The importance of information/knowledge sharing and drawing lessons from each others' experiences was emphasized. In this regard the role of UNTC and DPEPA/DESA was underlined;
- The utilization of partnerships both within nations and among nations with the participation of multiple stakeholders;
- The specific circumstances of each country indicate clearly that the basic issues/problems in pursuit of SD were more common than divergent;
- There was an agreement on the basic approaches to address the different challenges faced by each country, which are striving for SD through strong consensus building and multisectoral / multi-stakeholder participatory policies;
- The ongoing regional cooperation arrangements augured well for SD progress;
- The importance of coordination with EU was stressed by some participants;
- The importance of national efforts to implement Agenda 21 including the ways of strengthening them;
- The role of media and the necessity of building journalists' capacity to report on and provide in depth analysis of SD issues, including success stories and innovative experiences.

A complete set of the country reports, including the country recommendations, will be posted in the United Nations Online Public Administration Network (UNPAN) (www.unpan.org).

V. Governance Issues and Public Administration Role: Institution-Building and Human Resources Development Strategies for Sustainable Development

During the afternoon, plenary session II provided three presentations on (1) the foundations of good governance, decentralization and capacity-building; (2) the critical role of integrated policy development for sustainable development; and (3) current approaches to human resource development for a strong and effective public administration.

The first presentation presented the basic "foundation" principles, assumptions and best practices of good governance, decentralization and appropriate capacity-building for the first decade of the twenty-first century. Before the 1990s, the topic of good governance was rarely broached by international agencies, few nations of this region were venturing to reform or decentralize their

administrations, and "capacity-building" focused narrowly on training and institution building. Based on the powerful concepts and practices of accountability, transparency, predictability, and participation, **good governance** is now universally accepted as an essential precondition to nations' abilities to introduce and achieve an important measure of SD. Decentralization, as defined by the European Charter of Local Self-Government as well as the CIS Declaration on the issue, is playing a key role to bring public programmes and services closer to the people, especially in key environmental areas such as water provision. Indeed local governments are showing more practical progress with SD than the national level. Decentralization does not weaken the centre in order to strengthen local units, but empowers the entire system, by separating the responsibility for detailed implementation (local level) from the important functions of policy development and standard setting for the central administration. Within the newly emerging multi-polar context of participatory, transparent and decentralized administration and government, a broad understanding of **capacity-building** has emerged, one that stresses the creation and enhancement national abilities to define and achieve their own goals. The needed skills include networking, facilitation, conflict resolution, strategic problem solving and effective policy-formulation. Although such skills can be enhanced through training workshops, they are only truly acquired through experience. The presentation concluded by stressing the need for optimism in the region regarding progress in good governance for SD. Progress and a growing commitment to these basic principles and practices, even if slow, are evident in almost every country of the region and can reach a critical mass.

The second presentation dealt with institution-building strategies, prerequisites for effective implementation of SD. Good governance and sound public administration are preconditions for this implementation. They include respect for human rights and the rule of law; efforts to ensure an ethical and more transparent government process, and decision-making practices open to citizens. So far, the usual response to how to integrate an emerging issue in the policy debate has been to create new institutions. But beyond institutional changes SD also requires specific initiatives to better integrate economic, environmental and social goals within the mandate of each existing institution and within government as a whole. An important issue is *how* to advance this "integration agenda". The presentation stressed that central government agencies have a role to play in guiding, coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the SD agenda, which should be integrated into the regular policy process. Longer-term budgeting and sound regulatory instruments are important tools for this integration. Innovative decision-making mechanisms and policy processes associating the private and public sectors as well as NGOs, are also in demand. Managing knowledge for SD is also extremely challenging to raise awareness in different constituencies and to increase the visibility of the SD concept in and outside of government (including in the media). It is crucial to ensure that sufficient debate occurs on values, perceptions and views in order to make decisions more universally acceptable.

The third presentation stressed the important role of HRD in strengthening the public administration's crucial role in leading environmental governance. SD of human resources encompasses a critical institutional dimension that includes the creation and maintenance of an enabling framework to attract, retain, develop and motivate the needed competent people and to direct their energies towards the public interest. This includes all public servants at all levels of government: national, sub-national, and international, and the personnel of NGOs and civil society organizations as well to service long-term public or general interest. To raise performance standards throughout the public service and to enhance its prestige, professionalism is essential. It needs a degree of separation of public service management and HRD from both political activities and profitable pursuits. To make its yield sustainable, HRD must target all the qualities representing the profile of a true professional, namely substantive knowledge and high ethical values and standards. It must aim to reinforce the independent judgment of public service professionals coupled with accountability. Human resources management and development must

reflect and fit the conditions and needs of particular countries, which differ in many respects. One of the basic requirements in every country, accordingly, is for enhanced capacity for making policy choices, for policy design and policy implementation. Another pressing need is high-level capacity in performance measurement, monitoring evaluation. To enhance the overall quality of HRD and training, and make it cost-effective, the countries of the region should avail themselves of all the opportunities offered by the presence and the activities of the United Nations and other regional and sub-regional centres in the region.

Several delegates participated in the discussion as well as the representative of a regional NGO regarding the challenges of HRD. The greater utilization of modern information and communication technology in support of life long learning is essential. Governments need to take the leadership in moving their countries from the old classroom model to the new model of ICT-based continuing education in order not to lag behind in ICT' s utilization. The importance of improving and strengthening the state administrative apparatus and the systems of governance was also stressed. HRD must take into account exogenous pressures such as persistent diseases and other problems. Also, it was reminded that in many countries of the region, governance needs to be more rural focused, including strengthening local government's capacity. Good governance in many countries must include actions to overcome ethnic and religious barriers and tensions.

The following issues and proposals related to governance were also presented:

- The need to develop the capacity to generate bankable projects. Availability of seed money for the early stages of project development is essential.
- The important problem regarding NGO sustainability, as most NGOs remain financially dependent on a single or narrow range of support. Training programmes for NGOs on resource mobilization should be given a high priority, if they have to play a full and independent role in governance.
- The pressure to expand many successful local Agenda 21 projects to a national scale. However, such national projects will require an entirely different management approach than the small pilots they are replicating.
- The poor coverage of SD and especially of SD success stories by the region's media. This problem could be addressed through training packages to assist journalists to develop their analytical and reporting abilities regarding environmental issues.
- The need for more learning-by-doing and interactive training in addition to the seminar mode.

VI. The Johannesburg Conference: Main thematic areas, agenda, structure and processes.

The participants discussed the current status of preparations for the World Summit on SD, as well as particular concerns and challenges faced by countries with economies in transition with respect to the Johannesburg event. The presentation stressed the urgency of global problems – especially environmental degradation, and the possible associated increase of resource-based regional wars – and the opportunity offered by the World Summit on SD to refocus the attention of the international community on these issues and generate high-level political commitment to address these challenges through real action. In particular, six key challenges were identified:

- Globalization and its impact on SD, especially preserving important social, cultural and environmental values while benefiting from the positive aspects of globalization;
- Poverty alleviation, sustainable agriculture and food security;

- **Unsustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, especially in industrialized countries, which treat the planet as a "business in liquidation";**
- **The Connection between Environment and Health, including access to safe drinking water and sanitation services;**
- **Energy;**
- **Partnerships and public participation, facilitated through "the empowerment of people through greater political and economic independence and access to information."**

The presentation also offered an overview of the history and current status of preparations of the intergovernmental process leading to WSSD, including information on the key negotiating items on which agreement continues to be elusive. Among the outstanding issues, "good governance" was identified as being of particular relevance to countries with economies in transition. During the open discussion participants expressed a mix of optimism and apprehension about whether WSSD would be able to deliver outcomes that will bring us further on the journey towards SD. Some saw the developments over the past ten years as a pointer to further progress at and beyond Johannesburg; others were concerned about increasing patterns of social polarization and economic underperformance in parts of the region. Among the issues raised were the capacity and coordination problems of countries with economies in transition to have an effective voice in the negotiations of the "Draft Plan of Implementation"; the lack of public awareness of sustainability-related challenges and the need for mobilization through training and public outreach; the streamlining of United Nations institutional mechanisms for policy and programme delivery in the area of SD; and the need to move, through specific cross-boundary partnership initiatives, towards stronger regional cooperation. With respect to the latter, the organizers offered their assistance through their technical cooperation programmes.

VII. Role of governments in regional and international cooperation for integrated environmental and trade policies for sustainable development

During the plenary session IV, the presentation on Trade and SD outlined the role of UNECE in preparing for the WSSD through its ongoing work in the Committee on Environmental Policy and in organizing the regional ministerial preparatory meeting for the WSSD in September 2001, including the Environment for Europe process, which will convene in Kiev in 2003. Major challenges confront the public sector regarding trade and SD, especially the necessity to encourage a holistic approach to these issues. It is difficult to ensure "joined up government" even in the most developed countries. Moreover, a major challenge for public administrations is to create ongoing dialogue with the business community, civil society and local governments to foster significant contribution to the debate on trade and environment (ex. "Green" procurement).

In a global context, the UN Millennium Declaration Goals are adding a further dimension to the economic and social aspects of SD, especially the close links between, e.g. poverty alleviation and water usage, and also strategies for sharing the gains of globalization. Specific governance issues for the forest sector were discussed, including the Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe (to meet in 2003 in Vienna), and the fully coordinated work programmes of the UNECE Timber Committee and the FAO European Forestry Commission. Details were given of the UNECE capacity-building project to improve trade and SD of the Russian timber sector. Finally, the links between the WSSD and the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), in 2003 in Geneva to encourage public access to information, were underlined. The importance of action at the local level was recognized by many countries, considering that electorates are not adequately informed about SD. ICT can help build awareness and promote active networks. The potential contribution of eco-tourism to promoting sustainable economic development; the need to encourage value-added manufacturing based on foreign direct investment, rather than reliance

on the export of non-renewable resources, and the importance of the process of accession to the WTO as a means of encouraging greater coordination in the public administration were stressed. Some representatives of NGOs called for increased focus on social sustainability and the need for the UN to propose more realistic strategies for SD. A representative from Central Europe called for the UN to be more directly involved in dialogue with international financing institutions.

VIII. The Multi-stakeholder Approaches

Also, during the plenary session IV, the theory and practice of multi-stakeholder approaches related to the challenge of SD were introduced to the participants to improve their awareness of this new concept and its impact on governance and public administration. The presentation focused on the rationale for extensive consultations of civil society in the development of SD policy and on the modalities through which such participatory processes become most efficient and equitable. It was pointed out that SD policy is centred around politically charged issues of allocation of rights to resources and distribution of the benefits and costs of development. The resulting prevalence of conflict places negotiation and consultation skills at the centre of any process dealing with the SD problematique. Civil society can provide much of the expertise and creative thinking that is required to identify needs, generate innovative policy options and implement agreements, while governments retain their pre-eminent functions of ultimate decision-making. Common institutional arrangements for decision-making in the public sphere – i.e. the judicial, political and diplomatic processes – were briefly reviewed and arguments were offered for the addition of more informal, consensus-based approaches to complement the existing governance structures. It was pointed out that multi-stakeholder processes allow for joint problem solving and reconciliation between parties as they are entirely based on voluntary participation. Some process design challenges were also reviewed in light of the experience of the Commission on SD; in particular the challenge of interest representation, accountability, type of input sought from civil society, and facilitation.

A **negotiation simulation exercise** was organized to give participants the opportunity to build negotiation skills in a multi-stakeholder context and face, in concrete situations, the trade-offs associated with balancing the economic, environmental, and social pillars of SD.

IX. Civil Society and Governance: Partnership initiatives to strengthen the implementation of [illegible]

The role of DPEPA in strengthening NGOs' capacities within the framework of its technical cooperation programme was explained to the participants. This includes its support to the informal regional network of NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC (UN-NGO-IRENE) that was launched by the NGO Section of DESA in 2001 to enhance the partnership between the United Nations and the civil society. A scheme related to DPEPA strategic plan focusing on its role in strengthening participatory governance and sound public administration for poverty alleviation and SD, taking into account the challenges of the twenty first century and the Millennium Declaration Goals, was also presented to the participants. In this regard, DPEPA' work programme includes especially a capacity-building programme and training activities (workshops and training material) for the region in negotiation skills for diplomats, formulation and implementation of technical cooperation projects for NGOs, strengthening the UN-NGO-IRENE in the region, and support to institution building, public administration reform and human resource development upon request of the countries of the region.

The participants expressed their appreciation for DPEPA's work and underlined their urgent needs in this field and the crucial role of DPEPA in governance and public administration for SD in their region. They also presented and discussed several relevant partnership initiatives between NGOs and governments as well as success stories that could be expanded and adapted to other countries. One regional NGO presented also a sample of a partnership initiative between governments, NGOs and a donor country.

The Greek authorities offered a study tour of the nature reserve in Kerkini, as an illustration of a major achievement in improving a local eco-system.

X. Conclusions and Recommendations of the Workshop

A. Summary of General Conclusions

1. Participants expressed their gratitude to the United Nations for organizing this important meeting. Bringing together representatives of governments and NGOs with UN representatives represented an excellent step towards strengthening good governance, not only on the national, but also the global levels. This workshop enhanced the exchange of experiences and knowledge on governance, public administration and SD and reinforced dialogue, networking, consensus and partnership initiatives among the participating countries and with the UN. There is an urgent need for such training workshops to strengthen capacities and enhance the skills in this field. This training will also provide participants with tools including training material in integrated methodological approaches and holistic strategies for good governance, poverty alleviation and SD; effective public management of common goods; new technologies adapted to the region including learning via satellite. The media and the business community should also benefit from such capacity-building workshops.

2. Participants agreed on the usefulness of this workshop as a regional forum to exchange experiences and identify potential priority areas for future cooperation. The meeting concluded that cross-sectoral and multisectoral approaches lie at the heart of SD that no single sector can achieve sustainable progress in isolation, as that SD requires simultaneous interventions in a broad range of inter-related sectors. The complexity of organizing such interventions requires a highly developed sensitive and enlightened "governance" structure. The issue of globalization was also mentioned, as there is a need to address its SD implications. The importance of achieving "social consensus", as well as the processes for this end was emphasized. The role of the State to encourage a change in the attitude of the general public and ensuring their participation is also crucial for SD. The importance of peace and respect for human rights were also highlighted, as well as support for regional cooperation in this field. Finally, much evidence emerged from many of the statements, demonstrating that the transition is not merely an economic one but also entailed a broader societal transformation.

3. The concept of SD must be better understood and the goals of SD need to obtain the full support of all governments, as well as civil society and private sector, throughout the region. SD requires a long-term view, as well as broad perspectives on most major issues of policy. Such approaches need to be enhanced in order to overcome the tendency towards short-term fragmentary solutions to problems.

4. All countries have a stake in the success of the Johannesburg Summit. The outcomes of the Summit should more fully reflect the concerns of countries with economies in transition. These include speeding up the transition process, integration into the European and global

economy (membership of WTO, European Union, etc.). For most countries, they also include coping with environmental degradation, growing income disparities, poverty and unemployment, the relative inadequacy of basic social services and public administration. To ensure that the Summit outcomes respond to these concerns, the countries of the region need to consult more closely and coordinate their efforts in developing concerted regional strategies.

5. National strategies of countries in the region should be interlinked and SD-related coordination mechanisms should be developed to reflect the geographical, social, economic and environmental conditions. It is desirable to build on the experience and initiatives of international agencies and programmes (e.g. United Nations, UNDP, UNIDO, OECD, etc.).

6. The special needs of countries with economies in transition were underlined. These include capacity-building in governance and public administration to counter a legacy of planned socialist economy, which causes economic hardship and vulnerability to natural and technology-related disasters. Consequently, sufficient funding is required to shape appropriate public administration, participatory governance and fight against corruption, in order to reduce the gap between developed and developing countries and to accelerate the transition of CIS. The "debt for nature" and "debt for social programmes" schemes should also be considered for funding.

7. Promotion of financial sustainability and operational autonomy of local and SD-related NGOs by diversifying their sources of funding. Enhancing the participation of NGOs of the region in the UN-NGO-IRENE and strengthening their partnership with the ECOSOC

8. Need for cooperation among the countries present at the workshop on capacity-building at central level for developing strategies, coordinating the design of programmes on SD, setting up institutions to deal with cross-sectoral issues, and providing balanced approach for the SD various elements as well as balance between the vertical and horizontal approaches in managing SD.

9. Various peculiar situations affecting SD governance were mentioned such as the catastrophic situation of the Aral Sea Basin which affects all surrounding eco-system and water supply, and the irrational forestry management in some countries of the region. Requests were made for DESA technical cooperation to enhance their governance and management capacity to generate Local Agenda 21 projects, to develop them into bankable propositions, and to expand them in a cross-boundary and regional mode.

10. Implementation of Agenda 21 should be given the highest priority and the role of developed countries in this context should be emphasized. The role of the United Nations system should be reinforced in the follow-up of the Johannesburg Summit.

11. Capacity-building in government and civil society organizations is an essential prerequisite of successful implementation of Agenda 21. It includes institutional reinforcement and reform. It also encompasses HRD and technological progress. Greater attention should be paid to the role of government and private sector in promoting these objectives. HRD is very closely related to education and training. Education in and sensitisation to SD objectives are especially required in the public service at all levels of government, as well as civil society, both of which are engaged in the activities encompassed in Agenda 21.

12. In order to resolve the pending Johannesburg issues, the participants expressed their optimism on the potential outcome of the Summit and stressed the importance of high-level participation.

The meeting underscored the important role of good governance and public administration at the local level in achieving SD. This concern could be supported by Capacity 2015 platform announced during the Bali Preparatory Committee, which is building on UNDP/Capacity 21 Programme and should provide a platform for other partners – countries and international agencies, to join this effort.

In her concluding remarks, the Vice Minister of Turkey congratulated the participants for the success of the Workshop, which had been very well prepared, organized and conducted by DESA. She thanked again DESA for this timely initiative, which had proven beneficial to the whole region, and the Government of Greece for its great hospitality. She invited the participants to a follow-up capacity-building workshop in Istanbul, Turkey that should be organised by DESA shortly after the Johannesburg Summit in the framework of the implementation of its outcomes on governance and public administration for SD.

B. General Recommendations

1. The region should benefit from such very useful UN training workshops to strengthen the capacities and enhance the skills of the participating countries in governance and public administration for SD. The training should also provide them with tools including guidelines and training material especially in integrated methodological approaches and holistic strategies for good governance, poverty alleviation and SD; effective public management of common goods; new technologies adapted to the region including learning via satellite. The media and the business community should also benefit from such capacity-building workshops.

2. Appropriate funding be made available to supplement the national resources in order to implement the goals of SD in the region as well as the proposals described under item X-A 5-6-9, as stated in paragraph 9 of the Millennium Declaration Road Map (A/56/326) outlining the special obligation of "*the more fortunate countries to ensure that the less fortunate have a genuine opportunity to improve their lot*".

3. Additional technical and financial support be provided to the civil society and NGOs of the region in order to strengthen their capacity to participate in the whole process of SD as described under item X-A7

4. Countries should cooperate in exploring the existing opportunities for Type 2 partnerships in capacity-building for SD at central level for the purpose of formulation of adequate national strategies and development of specific programmes that achieve sound economic growth, social development and protection of the natural resources. Such balanced development can only be achieved within a framework of sound institutional arrangements, good governance, human capacity development and broad basic civic participation.

5. The rule of law and sound governance must become the driving force and basic component of an efficient SD implementation.

6. Allocations of seed money be made for the early stages of LA 21 projects to implement the future Capacity 2015 programme, as well as technical support to national public

administrations of the region to enhance their capacities in preparing guidelines and methodologies more integrated and extensive LA 21 projects.

7. Ratification and implementation of relevant international instruments on transboundary air and water pollution, including, *inter alia*, the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the Helsinki Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes should be promoted.

8. Capacity-building to landlocked countries in transition (Armenia, Azerbaijan, FYROM, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan) should be promoted to meet their special development needs, to tackle the challenges presented by their geographical handicap, and to ensure the effectiveness of the preparatory process to the International Ministerial Meeting of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to be held in Kazakhstan in 2003.

9. The role of the United Nations including its specialized agencies, funds and programmes should be strengthened as a unique international institutional framework in securing the effective follow-up to Johannesburg and other main conferences held under the UN aegis.

10. The Summit should take into account in the political declaration and the plan of implementation, the unique circumstances and conditions faced by the countries with economies in transition, especially the twin challenges of reforming a previously highly centralised administration apparatus and correcting the effects of a legacy of pervasive environmental pollution and degradation as well as their specific needs.

11. Heads of States and Governments of the region should be encouraged to participate in the Summit to ensure its success in resolving the pending issues.

12. UNDESA should organize in Istanbul, Turkey, a follow-up Workshop on Capacity-Building in Governance and Public Administration for Sustainable Development for the same countries and same participants to implement the Johannesburg Summit recommendations, following the invitation made to the participants by the Turkish Vice Minister.

13. The Report of the Thessaloniki Workshop on Capacity-Building in Governance and Public Administration for Sustainable Development in Countries with Economies in Transition must be presented in Johannesburg Summit to better take into account the specific context and needs of the region and its diverse countries.

Annex

List of Participating Countries and Organizations

Albania
Armenia
Azerbaijan
Belarus
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Bulgaria
Croatia
Czech Republic
Greece
Hungary
Kyrgyzstan
Latvia
Lithuania
Poland
Republic of Moldova
Romania
Russian Federation
Slovakia
Slovenia
Tajikistan
The F.Y.R. of Macedonia
Turkey
Ukraine
Uzbekistan
Yugoslavia
Economic Commission for Europe
Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States
NISPAcee
OECD
UNDP
United Nations Secretariat